

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Senegal

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New Senegalese Minister of Agriculture Named

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

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Report Highlights:

A new Minister of Agriculture, Khadim Gueye, was unexpectedly named by Senegalese President Wade to replace Mrs. Fatou Gaye Sarr. He starts officially during the week of July 19.

General Information:

Mr. Khadim Gueye Named as New Minister of Agriculture



According to *Le Soleil*, the mostly widely read Senegalese newspaper dated June 25, 2010, Mr. Khadim Gueye, Delegate Minister to the Minister for Agriculture to the outgoing Minister for Agriculture, Ms. Fatou Gaye Sarr, was named the new Minister of Agriculture by President Abdoulaye Wade on June 24, 2010. Since May 2009, Mr. Gueye had been in charge of relations with the union and farmers organizations.

This new appointment was a surprise among the media who opined that the nomination of Khadim Gueye as Minister of Agriculture was motivated by President Wade's desire to gain votes back from the agriculturally dependent Department (equivalent to "district") of Diourbel for his upcoming election and to restore hope to the farmers..

Khadim Gueye spent most of his career in *Sonacos*, known as *Suneor* as the President General Director. *Suneor* is the biggest oil processing company in Senegal. He is also a former assistant to the faculty of economic science of the *University Cheikh Anta Diop* (UCAD). Just after the announcement, many of his partisans exulted. He maintains excellent relationships with religious authorities who are also big farmers.

Mr. Gueye is the fifth minister of agriculture under Wade who assumed presidency in April 2000. Ms Fatou Gaye Sarr served about 14 months. According to media sources, the President held her accountable for the failed peanut marketing campaign in 2010 whereby peanut production dramatically increased, but could not be processed by the main processing companies for lack of capacity. Farmers were also ill prepared to export as governmental authorization was granted late (*See GAIN report dated February 24, 2010 for details*).

The media expects Khadim Gueye to work along these lines:

- Modernize agriculture.
- Allay fears of oil processing workers at *Suneor* about job security
- Compensate former workers of the *Sonagraines*, the subsidiary of the ex--*Sonacos* which was dissolved in 2001 as recommended by the *International Monetary Fund* and the *World Bank*. These workers, among 500, were not entitled to work compensation plans.

Although not reported yet, Post expects the new ministry to continue to work to meet the following objectives:

- The *Great Agricultural Offensive for Food and Abundance* (GOANA) program. This 2010-2011 campaign sets a production goal of 3,132,400 MT for cereals, including 750,000 MT for rice, 1 million MT for maize, 1 million MT for millet, and 1 million MT for peanuts.
- Implementation of the *Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program / New Partnership for Africa's Development* (CAADP/NEPAD) programs which was developed under the former Ministry of Agriculture under whom the Senegalese agricultural investment plan was signed on June 2010 and the Business Meeting on the financing of National and Regional Investment Plans was organized in Dakar on June 14–17, 2010 as part of the implementation of CAADP/NEPAD in West Africa..

The General secretary of the *Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux* (CNCR), the largest national farmers' group, disapproves the nomination of the new prime minister because of his background in organizing all farmers, breeders and fishermen under one national union (*SYNAEP – "Japando"*) which was newly formed and state-funded by the president of Senegal. They maintained that "The unionization of the farmers doesn't stand because we cannot put everybody in the same basket, especially when we are liberals. It is a concept which has no sense".